



South Dakota Department of the Military  
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



## SOUTH DAKOTA TO HOST EANGUS CONFERENCE

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) will hold their 42nd conference and expo in Sioux Falls, SD, August 18-21, 2013.

EANGUS was formally organized in 1972 with the goal of increasing the voice of enlisted persons in the National Guard. As such, EANGUS is a non-profit organization dedicated to the principles of providing an adequate national defense and promoting the status, welfare, and professionalism of the men and women of the Army and Air National Guard by supporting legislation that provides adequate staffing, pay, benefits, entitlements, equipment, and installations for the National Guard.

Gov. Daugaard and Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch will provide the welcome to the attendees.

Those traveling to the conference from the west may have driven past SDNG runners. The runners kicked off a 390 mile run from Mount Rushmore to Sioux Falls on Tuesday, August 13. Runners must run at least one mile with each unit being in charge of a ten-mile stretch.



The runners are carrying on their back, a United States of America flag that flew over Mt. Rushmore. Runners will arrive in Sioux Falls Sunday morning for a flag presentation ceremony at the Veterans Park in Sioux Falls. The flag will be presented to South Dakota Medal of Honor Recipient Michael J. Fitzmaurice.



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## PRO-BONO PILOT PROGRAM TO ASSIST VETERANS WITH DEVELOPING THEIR DISABILITY CLAIMS

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the American Bar Association (ABA) and the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) announced a new partnership and **pilot program** aimed at reducing the claims backlog and making it easier for unrepresented veterans to receive assistance developing their claims for disability pay.

“Ending the backlog is an ‘all hands on deck’ effort that requires teamwork, both in and out of government,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “This partnership between VA, ABA and LSC is aimed at surging resources to deliver earned benefits to veterans more quickly.”

In the coming months, ABA and LSC attorneys will provide free assistance to a targeted group of unrepresented veterans who request their help gathering and obtaining evidence required by law to support their disability claims. The **pilot** will offer pro bono attorney assistance to veterans with claims pending at the **St. Petersburg and Chicago Regional Offices** who do not currently have an authorized representative.

Veterans will choose whether to accept this pro-bono assistance. Similar veterans with claims pending at other VA regional offices may also be considered for the pilot, if warranted. The claims selected for this pilot program, which are currently – or will soon be – part of the claims backlog, will vary in terms of complexity and degree of completeness. VA will accredit the attorneys who choose to participate, and the ABA and LSC will provide them with specialized training that will enable them to help evaluate and develop veterans claims and make those claims ready for a rating decision. The two initial pilot sites were selected based on proximity to ABA headquarters, and the opportunity for the biggest impact on the backlog.

In the coming months, the VA will identify eligible veterans to participate in the pilot program and send letters advising them of all their options.

The VA letter will inform veterans of a 1-800 hotline and website to connect them to an attorney who is willing to assist with their claim, free of charge.

Under the partnership, the ABA and LSC will match interested veterans and attorneys on several factors, including geographic location, complexity of the claim and the veteran’s and attorney’s preferences on the nature and scope of representation.

The VA is continuing to implement several initiatives to meet the Department’s goal to eliminate the claims backlog in 2015. As a result of these initiatives, the VA reports its total claims inventory has dropped to its lowest levels since March 2011. They report that the number of claims in the VA backlog – claims pending more than 125 days – has been reduced by 18 percent, compared to the highest point in March 2013.



## SOUTH DAKOTA TRIBAL VETERANS CEMETERY DEDICATION

The dedication of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Sicangu Akicita Owicahe Tribal Veterans Cemetery will be held at 10:00 am (CT) on Thursday, August 22, 2013. The Sicangu Akicita Owicahe, Tribal Veterans Cemetery, is located on 80 acres of tribal land about 10 miles north of Mission



The Rosebud Sioux Tribe was awarded a VA grant for \$6,948,365. The grant was the first of its kind to be awarded to a sovereign tribal nation and is under the management of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe.

The cemetery is in the shape of a turtle—representing life longevity and fortitude.

## COALITION FOR MILITARY FAMILIES TO HOST PROVIDER'S SYMPOSIUM

The South Dakota Coalition for Military Families will host a Providers Symposium in Rapid City in buildings 802 and 420 at Camp Rapid on Wednesday and Thursday Sept. 11-12. Registration will begin at noon on Sept. 10 and resume at 7 a.m. on Sept. 11. Military immersion training will be conducted for everyone who registers for the training on the afternoon of Sept. 12.

This symposium is designed for professionals who want to learn to adapt their clinical skills to meet the needs of military veterans and their families. The target audience includes: psychologists, physicians, physician assistants, registered nurses, allied health professionals, social workers, licensed counselors, substance abuse professionals, public health workers, criminal justice professionals, chaplains, higher education, veteran caregivers and all interested others.

The South Dakota Coalition for Military Families seeks to build connections and create partnerships across South Dakota to care for and support service members, veterans and military families.

The symposium is sponsored by the Northeastern South Dakota Area Health Education Center and in cooperation between the South Dakota National Guard Service Member and Family Support and Ellsworth Air Force Base Airman and Family Readiness office.

There will also be an opportunity for military familiarization training on a weapons simulator, vehicle roll-over simulator, virtual convoy trainer and other experiences.

For more information contact: Kelley Crane (605) 737-6948 or [kelly.c.crane.mil@mail.mil](mailto:kelly.c.crane.mil@mail.mil).

To register: visit [www.nesdahec.org](http://www.nesdahec.org), select calendar and click on the date of the conference, or call (605) 229-8309 or (605) 229-8304. Registration is limited!

The South Dakota National Guard Museum will have a booth at the Expo. This is a great opportunity for Museum Director Sonja Johnson and her team to promote the museum and to encourage groups to visit.



## EIGHT KEYS TO VETERANS SUCCESS

As part of the Obama Administration's ongoing effort to foster postsecondary educational opportunities and dramatically improve employment outcomes for returning service members, the United States Department of Education (ED) and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today a challenge to education institutions to adopt best practices supporting educational success.

President Obama introduced the "8 Keys to Success" on Saturday at the Disabled American Veterans National Convention. "We're announcing what we call '8 Keys to Success' – specific steps that schools can take to truly welcome and encourage our veterans," President Obama said. "And so far, more than 250 community colleges and universities have signed on, and today I'm calling on schools across America to join us in this effort. Let's help our veterans get that degree, get that credential and compete for the high-skilled jobs of tomorrow."

With the more than 250 institutions leading the way, the "8 Keys to Success" can aid veterans in their effort to afford and complete their college degrees, certificates, industry-recognized credentials and licenses in preparation for jobs in high-growth sectors of the economy.

To help draft the "8 Keys to Success," ED convened more than 100 experts to review approaches that could be scaled and replicated to foster veterans' success on campus and via distance learning. A wide range of stakeholders participated in the discussions including non-profit organizations, foundations, veterans service organizations and, importantly, veterans who had recently completed postsecondary education in a range of disciplines. Best practices learned from existing programs at ED and VA provided the foundation for the "8 Keys to Success," specifically best practices from the highly successful VA VetSuccess on Campus programs.

"This is a major step forward in the Administration's work to encourage institutions of higher education to support veterans with access to the courses and resources they need to ensure that they graduate and get good jobs," said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

The "8 Keys to Success" include the following:

1. Create a culture of trust and connectedness across the campus community to promote well-being and success for veterans.
2. Ensure consistent and sustained support from campus leadership.
3. Implement an early alert system to ensure all veterans receive academic, career, and financial advice before challenges become overwhelming.
4. Coordinate and centralize campus efforts for all veterans, together with the creation of a designated space (even if limited in size).
5. Collaborate with local communities and organizations, including government agencies, to align and coordinate various services for veterans.
6. Utilize a uniform set of data tools to collect and track information on veterans, including demographics, retention and degree completion.
7. Provide comprehensive professional development for faculty and staff on issues and challenges unique to veterans.
8. Develop systems that ensure sustainability of effective practices for veterans.



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## EIGHT KEYS TO VETERANS SUCCESS (CONTINUED)

In April 2012, President Obama signed an executive order establishing the Principles of Excellence (POE), which provide protections for our nation's military, veterans, and their families.

To further veterans' success in higher education and employment, the VA is also expanding its [VetSuccess on Campus](#) (VSOC) and Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) programs, which connect veterans to VA resources. Thousands of colleges and universities are developing or expanding their Veterans Success Centers as a result of the VA's VSOC and VITAL investments. VSOC is currently located at 32 campus sites in 16 states and is expanding to additional campuses in 2013.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill has also played a large role in helping returning service members attend college. The VA has issued approximately \$30 billion in Post 9/11 GI-Bill benefit payments since its inception in August 2009, and helped nearly one million service members, veterans, and their families pursue an education. The Post-9/11 GI Bill is the most extensive educational assistance program since the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, more commonly known as the GI Bill, was signed into law.



WELCOME TO

VETSUCCESS.GOV

VetSuccess.gov is a comprehensive one-stop site for Veteran and Servicemember employment needs. Veterans can browse job listings, post resumes, and apply for positions directly on the site. Employers can post jobs, view Veteran resumes, and receive job applications.

## SDNG MUSEUM STAFF PARTICIPATES IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

The Dakota Collections Care Initiative (DCCI) offered disaster preparedness planning and response training workshops for museums, libraries, archives and cultural organizations. The training programs were held throughout North and South Dakota this summer.

The South Dakota National Guard Museum (SDNG) hosted the program for central South Dakota. This two-part training consisted of development of a disaster preparedness and response plan and a hands-on drill.

SDNG Museum Director Sonja Johnson participated in the training and was first in line for the fire drill.



# **“Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans” Golf Tournament**

## **ROLLING HILLS GOLF CLUB**

546 Palmer Circle  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
Phone: (605) 226-4487

### **4 Person/Team Best Ball**

**When:** Saturday, September 14, 2013

**Cost:** \$75 per player (\$300/Team)

**Registration:** 12:30pm – 1:00pm

**RSVP:** call/text Nicole (605) 848-2874  
or email [renner.nicole79@gmail.com](mailto:renner.nicole79@gmail.com)

★★★**“ONCE STRANGERS, FOREVER BROTHERS”**★★★



- Hole-in-One Shootout
- Price includes 18 holes and Cart
- Longest Drive Contest
- Closest to the Pin Challenge
- Longest Putt Contest
- Supper to Follow at Fairgrounds
- \$10.00 Discount for Vietnam Vets



**“Welcome Home  
Vietnam Veterans”  
Re-dedication Ceremony  
at 11:00am  
Poker Run at 12:00pm**

**Saturday**

**September 14, 2013**

**Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial**

**In Anderson Park**



**\$10.00 per hand**

**50% Payback**

**Organized by the DAV**

★★★**“ONCE STRANGERS, FOREVER BROTHERS”**★★★

# Upcoming Events

Aug. 16-17—Veterans Appreciation—Whitewood  
Aug. 21—SFVAHCS 12th Annual VA Show and Shine  
Aug. 21—Sioux Falls Veterans & Spouses Job Fair—Elmen Center (2505 S. Grange Avenue)—Sioux Falls—10:00 am  
Aug. 24—Walk for the Fallen—Sioux Falls  
Aug. 24-25—Freedom Bird 2013—W. H. Lyon Fairgrounds—Sioux Falls 10:00 am—5:00 pm  
Aug. 26-28—VSO Annual Benefits School—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre  
Aug. 29—Salute to Veterans and Military Personnel Day at the SD State Fair  
Aug. 31—DAV/727th Poker Run—Brookings Armory—11:00 am  
Sept. 11—Stand Down—Wagner National Guard Armory—11:00 am  
Sept. 13—Stand Down—Watertown—Salvation Army (621 4th St SE) - 11:00 am  
Sept. 13-14—Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Retreat—Aberdeen  
Sept. 20—Stand Down—Sioux Falls—VFW Post 628 (3601 S. Minnesota Ave.) 8:00 am—3:00 pm  
Sept. 21—Black Hills Veterans March—Deadwood  
Sept. 24—Stand Down—Aberdeen  
Sept. 28-29—American Legion Golf Tournament—Webster  
Oct. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am  
Dec. 15—Wreaths Across America Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—10:00 am

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